

The Crucible, Act III by Arthur Miller**Reading Warm-up B**

Read the following passage. Pay special attention to the underlined words. Then, read it again, and complete the activities. Use a separate sheet of paper for your written answers.

During the 1600s, the labor force in the American colonies consisted largely of indentured servants. In this system, would-be emigrants from England to the New World sold themselves to an agent or ship's captain. The contract, called an "indenture," would then be sold to a buyer in the colonies. In return for the cost of the ocean passage, and also for food, clothing, and shelter, the servant would be obliged to work for a period of four to seven years.

Some indentured servants, no doubt, quietly and placidly expected that such strategies or loys would successfully establish them in a land of opportunity. When these servants arrived in their new surroundings, however, they may have looked around them apprehensively. The realities of indentured servitude may have easily confused or befuddled them. Perhaps they had been misled, the victims of connivance between purchasers and agents. In any case, their work as household servants or farmhands was hard, the hours were long, and masters were often cruel and remorseless. Although indentured servitude has falsely been likened to apprenticeship, a more accurate comparison lurks beneath the surface: The system quite closely resembled slavery. Runaway servants were ruthlessly pursued. Masters who caught them did not suffer a qualm of conscience in extending the servant's term of service by several years. Indentured servants who misbehaved could be whipped. During the time of a person's indenture, he or she was considered as the master's personal property, and contracts could be inherited or sold. While under contract, an indentured servant was barred from marrying or having children.

1. Underline the word in this sentence that hints at the meaning of placidly. What is an antonym for placidly?
2. Circle the words in this sentence that hint at the meaning of loys. What are two loys a salesperson might use to make a sale?
3. Underline the words in this and the next sentence that hint at the meaning of apprehensively. Use apprehensively in an original sentence.
4. Underline the words in this sentence that hint at the meaning of befuddled. Write a sentence telling how a befuddled person might feel.
5. Circle the words in this sentence that hint at the meaning of connivance. Are the connotations of this word positive or negative?
6. Circle the word in this sentence that gives a good clue to the meaning of remorseless. What is an antonym for remorseless?
7. Underline the words in this sentence that hint at the meaning of lurks. What is a synonym for lurks?
8. Underline the words in this sentence that hint at the meaning of qualm.